

Vol. 7, Issue 4, January 2018

ISSN 2249-894X

REVIEW OF RESEARCH

An International Multidisciplinary Peer Reviewed & Refereed Journal

Impact Factor: 5.2331

UGC Approved Journal No. 48514

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CONTENT AND LANGUAGE INTEGRATED LEARNING (CLIL) IN INDIA: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

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ABSTRACT:-

The paper focuses on the prospects of Content and Language integrated learning in India and points out the probable problems that need to be tackled. It explains in the multilingual culture of Indian society in brief. It gives an insight into the Content and Language



Integrated Learning and its 4C framework. Furthermore, it deals in detail the wherewithals of how to implement CLIL methodology in Indian socio-political context. A critical bent to CLIL has also been discussed in the paper.

KEYWORDS: Content and

Language Integrated Learning, Problems and PROSPECTS.

INTRODUCTION:

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) has been a recent development in the field of language teaching in India. It revolves around the question of "How to teach a curricular subject through a language other than the mother tongue". CLIL is a dual focussed educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of content and language with the objective of promoting content and language mastery to predefined levels. (Maljers, Marsh, Wolff, Genesee, Frigols - Martin, Mehisto, 2010). CLIL has been in practise in Central Europe and German education system extensively (Bruning & Purrmann, 2012). CLIL, being a successful innovation in European education system in terms of teaching and learning language and content, has become a interminable discussion among the Indian educationists. But India, as a nation, has its own essence, inclination, singularity and individuality. So, whatever has been so victoriously implemented in the European education system may end up with some other fate. The problems and prospects of CLIL in India has been comprehensively discussed in the sections below.

MULTILINGUALISM AND THE THREE LANGUAGE FORMULA

India is a country with towering diversity. Multilingualism is a constitutive of Indian diversity. Our educational system should make every conceivable effort to sustain multilingualism (Crownall, 1992; Heugh et al. 1995) rather than suppress it (NCERT, 2005). The pattern in which the Indian education has persistently depleted the leverage of its characteristic grassroot multilingualism has been argued by Pattanayak (1981). It has been suggested by Illich (1981) that there is a need to empower the language of the under privileged and tribal and endangered languages by making feasible efforts. NCERT (2005) has

called for some affirmative action in this area. Pattanayak (1981) says "if participatory democracy has to survive, we need to give a voice to the language of every child". Multilingualism in school education has been solidly advocated by National Curriculum Framework (2005). UNESCO (2003) defines "Multilingualism in education" as the use of two or more languages as the medium of instruction. It has untold cognitive advantages too. A high positive relationship has been found between bilingualism/multilingualism, cognitive flexibility and scholastic achievement (Peal and Lambert 1962; Gardner and Lambert 1972; Cummins and Swain 1986). NCERT (2005) states that bilingual students not only have control over several languages but also are academically more creative and socially more tolerant.

In order to give voice to the language of every child and enhancing the cognitive abilities of the learners, multilingual method of teaching learning has to be adopted. We have already been provided with the strategy of three language formula to accommodate three languages within ten years of schooling. The All India Council for Education recommended the adoption of the Three Language Formula in September 1956 (Mallikarjun, 2002). According to this formula, the following has to be learnt by every child:

1. The mother tongue or the regional language.
2. The official language of the union or the associate official language of the union so long as it exists.
3. Modern Indian Language or a foreign language, not covered under (1) & (2) above and other than that used as the medium of instruction. (Subhash, 2013).

But, when studied several loopholes had been found in implementing the Three Language Formula in India. The National Curriculum Framework for School Education: A Discussion Document released on January 1, 2000, while reviewing the Three Language Formula, states: "In a number of states/organizations/boards, however, the spirit of the formula has not been followed and the mother tongue of the people has been denied the status of the first language". Thus, in reality, a two-language formula is followed in some states whereas in others pupils study languages like Arabian and Sanskrit in lieu of modern Indian Language. Some boards/institutions permit even European languages like French and German in place of Hindi. In this scenario, the three-language formula exists only in our curriculum documents and other policy statements. Several difficulties has been faced by the students in terms of pedagogic, curricular and environmental areas. According to Subhash (2013), the most important ones, among them in order of descending difficulty, are, 'confusing to learn grammars of different languages' (pedagogic) 'no occasion to use the language for practice' (environmental), 'no extra coaching at home' (environmental), and 'many other subject to learn' (curricular). He also argued that the students face difficulty in acquiring the four skills of language, i.e., understanding, reading, writing and speaking. This difficulty is most severely felt for the third language and the least for the first language. The teachers also face many difficulties in their task of language teaching. The most important are lack of modern teaching aids and training in the new techniques of language teaching.

Keeping in mind these issues, CLIL seems to be an alternative to the existing strategy. CLIL has been defined as a dualistic focussed educational approach where an additional language is used to teach the content. The additional language has to be other than the mother tongue and the regional language. CLIL is learning a language through other curricular subjects where the target language is the medium of instruction. CLIL consists of 4Cs framework developed by Coyle (1999). The 4 Cs are Cognition, Culture, Content and Communication. CLIL concentrates on the interrelationship between the content(subject matter, themes, cross curricular approaches), communication(language), cognition(thinking) and culture(awareness of self and otherness) to construct on the synergies of integrating content learning and language learning. CLIL have the potential to resolve the pedagogic problems of Three Language Formula. It provides enormous opportunities for learning language in context. It supports an interactive pedagogy where the learners can learn to practise language. When learning through CLIL, where an additional language is used, language-supportive resources, methods and activities are actively and coherently used to enable learners to use language purposefully (Padmanabham & Kruthika, 2016). Marsh (2000: 10) states the following:

"A major outcome of CLIL is to establish not only competence in two languages, but also nurture a 'can do' attitude towards language learning in general. So very often the CLIL language will itself only be a platform by

which the youngster may ultimately take an interest in other languages and cultures as well. If the child has a language which is not the language of the wider environment, then CLIL can lead to an even greater appreciation of that home language”.

CLIL is inspired by methodological principles that supports the learners exposition to situation calling for genuine communication. Padmanabham & kruthika (2016) argues that “CLIL assumes that subject teachers are able to exploit opportunities for language learning. The best and most common opportunities arise through reading texts. CLIL draws on the lexical approach, encouraging learners to notice language while reading. The language to be looked at falls into three categories - subject specific, academic and other lexis including fixed expressions and collocations”. So, in a nutshell, CLIL has countless scope as a pedagogical technique and can be better utilised in Indian context if efforts are made for planning.

HOW CLIL CAN BE IMPLEMENTED IN INDIAN CONTEXT

Besides 22 Scheduled languages, Indian census recorded 1576 rationalised languages, 1796 other mother tongue. India is home to two major linguistic families: Indo Aryan (74% of the population) and Dravidian (spoken by about 24%) and minorities being Austro-Asiatic and Tibeto-Burman families. 4C Framework of CLIL can be utilized very effectively and efficiently in Indian Context. A language in use along with learning in meaningful contexts and developing a critical intercultural understanding is central goal of CLIL Methodology. The integration of Content, Cognition, Culture and Communication can create intercultural understanding. In a Southern state, one subject may be taught through Hindi and in Northern states, one subject may be taught through any of the Southern Language. This would enable the learners to respect one’s own culture along with the culture of the target language. Mastering the grammar rules alone cannot ensure optimal learning. For achieving the desired outcomes, what we really need is to properly plan our lessons in advance keeping in mind the CLIL framework. Instead of making a third language as a separate subject, provisions and policies should be come up with to teach and facilitate a particular subject area in that third language. Moreover, the Content teaching need to collaborate with the language teachers. This would provide the learners with innumerable opportunities to practise the language.

Implementing the CLIL is a big challenge in Indian socio-political context. India is a chock a block with an array of divides. These divides are rural-urban divide, divides due to special needs, divides due to economic stability etc. If CLIL strategy is not properly planned, it would be widening the gap and worsening the situation. CLIL would be implemented successfully only if the teachers are prepared for it. Teacher Education of the country would need reforms. The teachers need to internalise that the spirit of CLIL lies in collaboration with each other and team teaching. The so-called content teachers i.e., the teachers of the subject matter needs to collude with the language teachers and work as a team to execute CLIL to its best possible way.

The other hurdles that lies ahead of its materialisation is designing evaluation techniques in CLIL methodology. The evaluation strategies should be so designed that it does not create a divide between the linguistically intelligent and the others. Furthermore, care should be taken while designing activities for the teaching learning process so as to avoid any divides. So, what we need is an indepth research in this direction and coming up with innovative evaluation strategies for the better implementation of CLIL.

CONCLUSION

CLIL is a pedagogical technique where an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of content and language. It has been a successful practise in Europe since 2006. In India, it can be implemented if proper care is taken in certain domains like teacher training, evaluation strategies, dealing with already existing divides etc. CLIL has to be given a different bent than the European practises for its better implementation in India. In Northern states, Southern languages can be taken as the target language and in Southern states, Hindi can be taken as the target language. Moreover, it can be a boon to the multilingualism of our country, fosters multilingual education that has untold cognitive

benefits and enable learners to generate intercultural understanding.

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